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STATISTICAL SUMMARY

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS, U. S. D. A.

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BILLION-BUSHEL WINTER WHEAT CROP

Winter wheat production of 1,020 million bushels, indicated April 1, is second largest crop on record. The 1949 prospective production is about 3 percent above the 1948 crop, 40 percent above the 10-year average, but 5 percent less than the 1947 record crop. Acreage loss due to winter-killing was relatively light in all areas except in sections of Washington and Oregon. Abandonment and diversion to uses other than grain is indicated at about 8.5 percent of seeded acreage, compared with 9.1 last year and the 1938-47 average of 11.1 percent.

WHEAT STOCKS ABOVE AVERAGE

Wheat stocks on farms April 1 are estimated at 239,315,000 bushels, about 7 percent smaller than a year ago, but 18 percent above the 10-year average. Movement from farms in the first quarter of 1949 was lower than in the same quarter of any of the past 6 years. Disappearance was relatively low in most of the Great Plains States, owing to the difficulties of moving grain during the winter storm period in some areas. However, movement of 1,144 million bushels of wheat from farms since harvest is the second heaviest movement of record for the period.

OTHER FARM STOCKS LARGE

Corn stocks on farms totaled 1,776 million bushels on April 1, largest of record for this date. Total exceeds the 1943 record by 419 million bushels, is more than double stocks of 843 million a year ago and 47 percent above the average of 1,206 million bushels. Disappearance of 743 million bushels of corn from farms during the first quarter of 1949 was 12 percent above last year, but the smallest since 1942.

Oats on farms totaled 578 million bushels, a record high for April 1. Compares with 405 million bushels a year earlier and the average of 454 million bushels. Disappearance of 350 million bushels was greater than in the first quarter of 1948, but was small in relation to last year's heavy production.

Barley stocks on farms April 1 were 112 million bushels. Compares with 69 million bushels a year earlier and the 1940-47 average of 95 million. Disappearance of 45 million bushels from farms during the first quarter was the second smallest of record.

Rye stocks on farms at 5,454,000 bushels were 23 percent larger than a year ago, but less than half of the 1940-47 average. January-March disappearance of rye from farms was 17 percent greater than during the same period last year and 41 percent larger than in 1947.

Soybean stocks on farms were a record 51.6 million bushels, largest for April 1 since 1943 when estimates were begun. Disappearance from farms was also high during the first quarter, amounting to 23 million bushels, compared with 19 million bushels January-March 1948. If March 1 planting intentions are carried out, about 15 million bushels of soybeans will be needed to plant the 1949 acreage.

FEED SUPPLIES SOMEWHAT SMALLER IN 1949-50

Feed grain supplies for 1949-50 will be moderately smaller than the record large supply for 1948-49, if farmers plant acreages of feed grains about as indicated March 1, and if yields are about average. Livestock numbers are expected to increase moderately from the 1948-49 level. In relation to livestock numbers the feed supply would be about 10 percent smaller than that of 1948-49, but larger than in most other recent years.

SEASON ADVANCED IN EAST AND SOUTHEAST; LAGGING ELSEWHERE

Progress of farm work on April 1 was about normal for the country as a whole. Season was well advanced in East and Southeast. From Nebraska and Missouri south and southeastward to the Gulf of Mexico excessive moisture kept fields too wet for work. Delays in spring work are causing shifts in cropping plans in this area. Progress was slightly delayed in other parts of the country, but adequate labor and machinery will permit rapid progress when fields can be entered. Seeding was under way in East North Central States. Snow was gone from all but the northernmost farming areas, with a minimum of run-off, assuring adequate soil moisture supplies. Further delays in spring work occurred in early April, but two weeks of good weather now would do much to overcome the delay.

Pasture condition, at 85 percent, has been exceeded only in 1945 and 1946 of the past 20 years, indicating prospects for early and abundant grazing.

WEATHER FAVORABLE IN LATE MARCH

Weather was favorable for farm work and vegetative growth during the latter third of March, following two weeks that were cold enough to be unfavorable. Average temperatures during March were within 2 degrees of normal in most of the country, although 4 to 6 degrees above normal in part of the middle Atlantic area. Precipitation below normal in Atlantic and Southwest areas, parts of the Dakotas, and Northern Mountain areas. Excessive snow or rain fell in a wide diagonal across the central Great Plains and westward to most of California. Other wet areas were in the lower Mississippi Valley between southern Illinois and eastern Missouri, and in eastern Washington. Snow had virtually disappeared except along the northern border and in mountain areas, with most of the snow-water absorbed into the soil. Snow packs in most western mountain areas are deeper than usual, promising adequate irrigation water supplies. Supplies in sections of Arizona and California depending on wells have improved, but are still inadequate.

RYE CONDITION GOOD

Rye condition on April 1 was 89 percent of normal, the same as on April 1 a year ago, and 6 points above the 10-year average of 83 percent. Crop came through the winter in good condition in most of the important producing areas.

EARLY POTATOES IN EXCELLENT CONDITION

Condition of early Irish potatoes in the 10 Southern States and California is 85 percent of normal, compared with 77 percent a year ago and the 1938-47 April 1 average of 78 percent.

FRUIT CROP PROSPECTS GOOD

Fruit trees and buds came through the winter with little damage in most areas, and prospects for fruits and nuts on April 1 were good in most of the country. Chief exceptions: freeze damage in mid-March to peaches in South Carolina-Georgia-Alabama area; damage from low winter temperatures in Utah, Idaho and parts of Washington; severe loss of 1948-49 citrus crops by January freezes in California, Texas, and Arizona.

Apples: Prospects favorable for about an average-sized crop.

Peaches: Condition in the 10 early southern peach States April 1 was 55 percent of normal, compared with 67 percent a year ago, and average of 74 percent.

Pears: Prospects generally favorable in important Pacific Coast area.

Grapes: Prospects favorable, but it is too early to judge the crop.

Citrus: Growing conditions generally favorable during March in all areas except Florida, where weather continued hot and dry until the heavy rains in the last week of March. Orange production put at 99 million boxes, off 10 percent from last year. Grapefruit production of 45.2 million boxes, 27 percent below

PARITY PRICES FOR FARM PRODUCTS AND ACTUAL PRICES RECEIVED

COMMODITY AND UNIT	ACTUAL PRICE		PARITY PRICE
	Feb. 15, 1949	March 15, 1949	March 15, 1949
Wheat, bu.	1.94	1.98	2.17
Corn, bu.	1.12	1.18	1.58
Peanuts, lb.	10.3	10.5	11.8
Cotton, lb.	29.14	28.74	30.50
Potatoes, bu.	1.72	1.74	1.80
Hogs, 100 lb.	19.60	20.00	17.90
Beef cattle, 100 lb.	18.70	20.50	13.30
Veal calves, 100 lb.	24.30	24.50	16.60
Lambs, 100 lb.	21.50	23.60	14.50
Butterfat, lb.	1/ 62.5	1/ 62.5	64.7
Milk, wholesale, 100 lb.	1/2/4.19	1/ 4.15	3.94
Chickens, live, lb.	29.5	30.4	28.0
Eggs, doz.	1/ 45.9	1/ 46.8	52.9

1/ Seasonally adjusted.
2/ Revised.

last year's. About 43 million boxes of oranges available for use after April 1; last year 52 million boxes utilized after April 1. Grapefruit available: 7 million boxes, compared with 19 million boxes utilized after April 1 last year.

SPRING TRUCK CROPS

Commercial truck for spring harvest is down about 4 percent from last year, for the crops estimated so far. But total spring tonnage may slightly exceed 1948 production when estimates for the remaining crops are included.

MORE EGGS AND CHICKENS

Farm flocks laid 6,137 million eggs in March, 1 percent more than in March 1948 and 8 percent above the 10-year average. The increase over last March was due to a 3 percent higher rate of lay, which more than offset a 2 percent smaller number of layers. Egg production per layer averaged 17.2 eggs during March, compared with 16.6 in March last year and the average of 15.6 eggs.

Chicks and young chickens of this year's hatching on farms April 1 are estimated at 209,287,000 - 32 percent more than last year's small April 1 holdings and 11 percent above the 10-year average. Holdings on April 1 were larger than a year ago in all parts of the country.

Farmers received an average of 41.2 cents per dozen for eggs in mid-March, compared with 42.6 cents a year earlier. Egg prices decreased 0.6 cents per dozen from February to March this year compared with a decrease of 2.4 cents last year, and the 10-year average decrease of 1.2 cents.

Chicken prices on March 15 averaged 30.4 cents per pound live weight, a record high price for the month. This compares with 27.2 cents a year ago and an average of 19.8 cents.

MORE MILK THAN YEAR AGO

Milk production in March was 9,558 million pounds, about 4 percent more than in March 1948 and 2 percent above the 10-year average. March production was well above that for the month in any of the pre-war years 1925-41, but was below the 1942-47 level, when larger numbers of milk cows were on farms. Fewer milk cows on farms in March than in any month since January 1931. Milk production per cow, however, was at the highest rate for March on record.

A record rate of grain and concentrate feeding to milk cows continued on April 1. This is the time when the amount fed per cow is near the seasonal peak that occurs before pasture feed becomes generally available. On April 1, milk cows in crop correspondents herds were fed an average of 6.22 pounds of grain, millfeeds and other concentrates per head per day, 14 percent more than a year ago, and 4 percent more than the previous April 1 high of 5.99 pounds per cow in 1947.

PRICES RECEIVED AND PAID

Prices received by farmers recovered slightly from last month's drop and in mid-March were about 1 percent higher than in mid-February, but were 8 percent lower than a year ago. The rise resulted mainly from higher meat animal prices, with grain and fruit prices also contributing to the increase.

The Index of prices paid, including interest and taxes, advanced 1 point during the month to 246, and is 2 points lower than in mid-March a year ago.

MORE CATTLE ON FEED IN CORN BELT

The number of cattle on feed for market on April 1 in the 11 Corn Belt States increased about 23 percent over the low number last year, with a total of about 480,000 head. This is about 8 percent fewer cattle on feed than there were two years ago, however. Feeders plan to market 49 percent of the fed cattle before July 1, about the average percentage.

OUTLOOK FOR AGRICULTURE IN 1949

Barring unexpected changes in the international situation or in business and consumer anticipations: Demand for farm products is likely to continue strong through 1949, but at a lower level than in 1948. Prices received by farmers and cash receipts from farming may average about 10 percent below the 1948 record. Farmers production costs likely to be slightly smaller than in 1948. Realized net income of farm operators will be down more than cash receipts, but decline will be offset by lower rural living costs.

JANUARY-APRIL CASH RECEIPTS DOWN

Cash receipts from farm marketings during the first 4 months of 1949 are estimated at about 8 billion dollars, 4 percent below last year. Farmers received 7 percent less from sales of livestock and products and slightly more for crops than they got in January-April 1948.

FARM COSTS CONTINUE HIGH

Farmers' cost rates are expected to continue high in 1949, although a few items, notably feed, will be lower than in 1948. As a result, individual farmer's costs will be affected differently, depending largely on the type of farming. For the country as a whole, farmers' costs may total about 5 percent lower in 1949 than in 1948.

SUGAR CONSUMED AT PREWAR RATE

Sugar consumed by civilians in the United States in 1948 totaled 7½ million tons, an all-time record. This is equivalent to a per capita consumption of about 96 pounds, 4 pounds higher than in 1947, and about equal to the pre-war level. It was the highest since 1941, when consumption was 103.5 pounds per capita. Total civilian consumption in 1949 will continue high, although probably somewhat below 1948. World production is now estimated at 37,684,000 tons for the 1948-49 season, largest on record.

FARM WAGE RATES WEAKEN

Farm wage rates weakened between January 1 and April 1. Normally, wages strengthen moderately as the farm work season gets under way. The seasonally adjusted wage rate index (1910-14=100) fell from 438 on January 1 to 416 on April 1, 4 points below the level of a year ago. This was the first time since July 1939 that the index has been lower than a year earlier.

A major factor in the slight drop from a year ago was the increased relative importance of hired labor in the Southeast. Weakening of farm wage rates can be attributed to: more ample supplies of labor, weaker demand for farm labor because of smaller net farm incomes, and increased availability and use of farm machinery.

About 9-1/3 million people worked on farms during the week of March 20-26, 11 percent more than in late February, but 7 percent fewer than worked during the corresponding week a year ago. March was the fifth consecutive month of smaller farm employment than a year earlier. There were 8 percent fewer family workers and 2 percent fewer hired workers than a year ago.

MEN'S CLOTHING PREFERENCES

Men's preferences concerning various competing fibers -- cotton, wool, rayon, nylon, and their mixtures -- in certain selected articles of clothing, and men's beliefs regarding the advantages and disadvantages of various fibers are revealed in a 8AE preliminary summary report, "Men's Preferences Among Selected Clothing Items," based on a sample survey made possible by Research and Marketing Act funds.

LAND VALUES TURN DOWNWARD

During the 4 months ended March 1949, farm real estate values turned downward for the first time in 10 years. Most of the declines were in the Western third of the country. Values are 1 percent lower than in November 1948 and only 3 percent above March a year ago. This gain during the year compares with a 7-percent increase during the year ending March 1948 and is the smallest since 1940-41. The volume of voluntary sales during the year ending in March 1949 was 17 percent smaller than in the previous year and nearly a third below the peak shown for the year ending March 1947.

FARMER GETS 50 CENTS OF FOOD DOLLAR

Farmers received 50 cents out of each dollar spent for food in February, compared with 51 cents in January and 52 cents in February 1948. The farmer's share of the consumer's food dollar has fallen to 50 cents only once since July 1943. That was in May 1948, but by the next month the farmer's share had returned to 52 cents.

CURRENT INDEXES FOR AGRICULTURE

INDEX NUMBERS	BASE PERIOD	March 1949
Prices received by farmers	1910-14= 100	261
Prices paid by farmers, interest and taxes	1910-14= 100	246
Parity ratio	1910-14= 100	106
Wholesale prices of food	1910-14= 100	250
Retail prices of food	1910-14= 100	258
Farm wage rates	1910-14= 100	408
Weekly factory earnings	1910-14= 100	489
PRODUCTION COMPARISONS		
	Jan. - Mar. 1948	Jan. - Mar. 1949
Milk, (Bil. lb.)	25.6	26.5
Eggs, (Bil.)	15.1	15.5
Beef, (Dr. wt., mil. lb.)*	4/ 1,131	4/ 1,132
Lamb & Mutton (Dr. wt., mil. lb.)*	4/ 116	4/ 103
Pork & Lard (Mil. lb.)*	4/ 1,728	4/ 1,830
All meats (Dr. wt., mil. lb.)*	4/ 3,084	4/ 3,166

* Federally inspected only.

4/ January - February.

1/ February figure.

2/ April figure, unadjusted for seasonal variation.

3/ January figure. Factory payroll per employed worker.